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In 3Hh

Housekeepers' Chat

Thursday, December 20, 1928

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Spare the Holly." Information about holly from Forest Service, U.S.D.A. Recipe for Yeast-Raised Doughnuts from Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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"Aren't you glad, Aunt Sammy, that Christmas is almost here? Don't you think it's about time for us to get the Christmas tree decorations?"

If I have answered these questions once, I have answered them fifty times this week. Billy is simply brimming over with enthusiasm. Wherever I go, he's under foot. If I slip into my bedroom and open the lower dresser drawer very cautiously there's Billy, standing in the doorway like a mischievous little imp.

"Aha, Aunt Sammy, I saw what you put in there! But I won't tell!"

There's no use trying to hide things from an irrepressible child like Billy. For his sake, I'm glad we're having an old-fashioned Christmas, with stockings over the fireplace, candles in the window, and evergreen wreath on the door.

I like an old-fashioned Christmas, too; in fact, I quite agree with the person who wrote: "Though the bright ones and sophisticated of the world may find the old-fashioned way of keeping Christmas a bit too slow for them, yet Christmas without traditions is a poor holiday. You simply can't be modernist about it. For one day at least you may forget to keep abreast of the times, forget contemporary life. Christmas should be as old-fashioned as you can make it. Be perfectly childish about it, for it is one of the few events of life over which you can be childish. It is the one supreme day of which the old order does not change, nor give place to the new."

Do you like that sentiment? So do I, and I intend to have the kind of a Christmas that my family will enjoy, with a Christmas tree, mistletoe, and holly.

It is the holly that I want to talk about this morning. Did you ever see a holly tree, growing out of doors? The first holly tree I ever saw is growing in a park in front of the Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D. C. It is gorgeous, at this time of the year, with its bright red berries, and shiny green leaves. This tree belongs to Billy and me. We adopted it the first time we went to Washington. Nobody knows it, of course, excepting Billy

and me-- and now you. We are quite satisfied to leave our holly tree where it is -- so that we can enjoy it every time we go to Washington. Billy was thrilled, the first time he saw the tree. "Why, Aunt Sammy!" he exclaimed, "Look! Did you know that holly grows on a tree?" Then he hippity-hopped around the big tree, making up a sing-song poem that went like this:

"When we dance around the holly,
Everything is bright and jolly."

But I must not talk so much about my family, when it's holly I am planning to discuss.

The holly is one of the most beautiful trees in our woods, and one of the few broadleaf trees that are evergreen. Because it is one of the most popular of all our Christmas greens, each Christmastide sees huge quantities of holly shipped to market.

The enormous use of holly, especially as a Christmas green, is resulting in its fast disappearance. This is particularly true in the northern and eastern parts of its range. According to the Forest Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the holly tree is in more danger of extinction through extensive cutting for market, than any other of our native trees.

Holly grows very slowly; its seeds take two years to germinate. You can see that holly is at a disadvantage in keeping up with the inroads made upon it every year. No longer are holly bushes and trees conspicuous along the roadside.

Have you noticed that much of the holly on the market during the past few years is without berries? This is the result of the destructive cutting of the pistillate, or female trees, which are the only ones that produce berries. This leaves the male trees to furnish most of the stock for the Christmas market.

In most sections, holly has been cut without rhyme or reason. Trees and bushes have been despoiled beyond any possibility of recovering from the injury, and in numberless cases whole trees have been cut down and hauled to market. Shortly before Christmas, many a city motorist takes his trusty car and goes hunting for holly, in the adjacent countryside; if he's in a generous mood he gets enough holly for his family, and all his friends.

It doesn't occur to him that he is taking the holly without the knowledge or permission of the owner of the land; if he were accused of stealing, he would be highly indignant. But it is stealing. A part of the wild holly sold during the holidays is obtained in just this way. Trees have even been taken from the front of summer homes, despite the fact that the property was fenced in.

My friends in the Forest Service say that if we are to perpetuate this beautiful and valuable tree, we must not only save the supply that is left, but we must also grow more holly. Promiscuous cutting should be stopped. Landowners who have holly on their property should supervise every cutting, to make sure that, when boughs are cut, the trees are left in condition to recover, and put on new growth. The planting of holly, and the use of cultivated holly should be en-

couraged. Holly, growing in a pretty flower pot or jardiniere will make an attractive decoration for the home, not only during the holiday season, but the whole year 'round. Later it may be planted out-of-doors, as is often done with potted Christmas trees.

Perhaps you'll be interested in learning that holly wood is a favorite with cabinet makers, and is used much in cabinet work, and wood-turning. It is light, tough, fine-grained, and almost white, somewhat resembling ivory. It is made into work tables, fancy boxes, and many kinds of dainty articles.

Like the dogwood, the holly is more beautiful in its natural setting than anywhere else. And this beauty is not limited to one season. In the late spring, its small creamy-white flowers form lace-like patterns against the dark background of the leaves. But it is loveliest in the winter, when the berries are ripe. Then it holds forth in all its glory of green leaves and crimson berries. To come upon its warmth and color in the gray and white of the winter woods, is like meeting a kindly friend.

Now let's see what we have with us today, in the way of questions. Here's a Kansas listener who wants a recipe for Yeast-Raised Doughnuts, sprinkled with powdered sugar. Ever eat them? Then you know they're good. Eight ingredients, for Yeast-Raised Doughnuts:

1 cup scalded milk	2 tablespoons butter
1 egg	3/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1-1/2 teaspoons salt	1 yeast cake, and
3/4 cup sugar	3-1/2 to 4 cups sifted soft-wheat flour

Scald the milk, add the butter, and when lukewarm add the yeast and sugar. Stir in 1-1/2 cups flour. Allow the sponge to stand in a warm place until ^{very} light. Add the beaten egg and the rest of the flour, which has been sifted with the salt and nutmeg. Knead, until thoroughly mixed. The dough should be softer than a bread dough. Cover and set in a warm place to rise. When light, roll from 1/2 to 3/4 inch thick on a lightly floured board, cut with a doughnut cutter, cover, and set in a warm place until almost double in bulk.

Heat the fat in a heavy kettle to the temperature between 330° F. to 340° F. Put in the doughnuts with the raised side of the doughnut down in the fat, and turn when brown on the underside. These doughnuts should be cooked through in 3 or 4 minutes. Drain on absorbent paper and sprinkle with powdered sugar while hot.

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Friday: The Christmas Dinner. (Two menus and four new recipes).

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